



THE WONDER *of the* BOOK OF GOD

By Herman A. Hoyt, Th.D.

"Thy testimonies are wonderful," is the enthusiastic outburst of the psalmist. Such have been the outbursts that have echoed from soul to soul down through the centuries of time. "Thy testimonies are wonderful" (Ps. 119:129). Sir Walter Scott, that famed writer of novels of long ago, in his dying hour asked his son-in-law to read to him from the Book. Lockhart, in bewilderment, inquired of him, "What book?" To which the great man replied: "The Book; there is only one Book, the Bible. In the whole world it is called 'The Book.'" And the great man was right. There is only one Book. All other books are mere leaves, mere fragments, mere attempts. The Bible alone is the perfect book. It is the eternal book. It is the great voice; all others are merely echoes.

The psalmist as he surveyed the works of God burst forth into this paean of praise: "The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit

unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof" (Ps. 19:1-6). The psalmist has scarcely uttered this magnificent eulogy until his mind turns to the words of God, and there falls from his lips such words of praise as can be applied to no other book. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward" (Ps. 19:7-11).

For a few minutes we shall meditate upon some of the wonders of the Word of God.

Wonderful in Inspiration

Paul declares: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God" (II Tim. 3:16). This passage states, to make it quite literal, that all Scripture is God-breathed. In this sense the Scriptures are in the same category with creation. We are told that the heavens were made by the "breath of his mouth." Into the first man God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life . . . and man became a living

soul." Hence we are to understand that God breathed forth the Scriptures. This means that not man, but the Scripture, is inspired. Of course, the writers of the Scriptures were moved by the Holy Ghost, but strictly speaking, the Scriptures are inspired. This provides for the absolute accuracy of the Scriptures, and in no way degrades the writers into mere machines, thus preserving in every book of the Bible the human touch, the human circumstances, and the human personality.

Wonderful in Translation

On the day of Pentecost it was a historic fact that "every man heard them speak in his own language" (Acts 2:6). God performed a miracle of speaking in His preachers to accomplish this feat. And since the message from God recorded in the Bible is a message for all men, it has been wonderful how God has been getting that message to men through translation. Through more than nineteen centuries the miracle of translation has been going on. Today the Word of God has been translated into more than a thousand languages and dialects, and it has never lost any of its power. As the Irishman said: "Faith, I read my Father's Word in my mother tongue." More than thirty-five years ago the various publishing houses of the world were printing over 25,000,000 copies of the Bible every year, to say nothing of

the portions of the Bible. And within the last thirty-five years the increase has been so stupendous it defies our comprehension.

Wonderful in Preservation

It was Isaiah who declared: "The word of our God shall stand for ever" (Isa. 40:8). By this he meant among other things that the Word of God would be preserved. Allow me, however, to define what I mean by preservation. I shall do so by way of illustration. In my mother's kitchen I often watched her put up preserves. I saw her carefully cleanse a jar; then with as much care place the cooked substance in the jar. The final operation was to seal the jar. Now to put it in a sentence, her efforts were expended in order to prevent anything on the outside from getting on the inside, and to prevent anything on the inside from getting on the outside. This is preservation. The same thing is meant when we refer to the preservation of the Word of God. All that is on the inside has been kept there. And all that is on the outside has been kept on the outside. Though this Book has been handled by countless hands, both by friend and enemy, we have it today substantially as it came from the pens of the Spirit-moved writers of long ago.

Wonderful in Consummation

In the capstone book of the Bible it is recorded, "And they shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 22:5). This is the consummation, and by this we mean the way things come out. There is a longing in the human heart for things to come out right. And the Bible is the only book in the world that truly comes out right. I remember so well the novels which I read as a boy. Once upon a time there was a beautiful maiden with eyes of azure blue. Then I was introduced to another character. He was a stalwart, handsome, ambitious, courageous, gallant, young man. And then the two met, this handsome young man and the golden-haired maiden. And that meeting seemed a token of things to come. Invariably, an uncontrollable curiosity would seize me at such a time, and I found myself peeking into the last chapter

of the book. Oh . . . and what I saw. The last lingering rays of the sun are intermingling with the shadows of evening, and the love-light in two pairs of eyes and two lives are intertwining for the long walk together. And they lived happily ever after.

So it is with the Bible. It comes out right. The opening words are like a breath from eternity. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." And then I read on and I am ushered into a garden, the garden of God in the paradise of the past. I stand with wide-eyed wonder as I gaze upon the scene. I have never heard or read anything like it. There I see a man, a perfect man, and from an open countenance he radiates a God-light. I soon become aware of the presence of a beautiful woman. But her beauty transcends the beauty of any woman that I have ever read of or seen. I follow them. Their lives are filled with untold happiness: no sin, no sorrow, no sighing. Then one day a tragedy takes place; sin enters the scene, and sorrow and sighing, and suffering follow hard upon his heels. I am now bound with interest to these two people. I want to know their fortunes, and with the same curiosity I turn to the last chapter of the book, and there I read: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away" (Rev. 21:4). "And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 22:5).

Wonderful in Salvation

Of the Scriptures, it was Paul who

said that they "are able to make thee wise unto salvation" (II Tim. 3:15). Without a doubt, herein lies the reason that this Book is wonderful in its consummation. For were it not for the fact that the sinning family of Adam were brought a message of redemption and salvation from sin, there would be no happy and glorious ending to the great drama being enacted in the earth through the centuries.

The Bible in substance is a revelation from God. In method it was given by inspiration of God. Its great purpose is to bring the salvation of God. The Bible is not the saviour of men. But it does bring the message to men of a great Saviour in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. It records the pre-existence of the Son of God, the supernatural act of humiliation and incarnation in human flesh, the sinless life He lived among sinful men, the vicarious and expiatory death He died on Calvary, the triumphant resurrection from the dead, His glorious ascension back to the Father, His intercession for the saints, and His wonderful coming again. Wonderful is the trail of the Scriptures through the centuries as it has carried this convicting, converting, transforming, and sanctifying message of the Saviour. Wherever it has gone one may trace its footprints in the lives of men. Here a regenerated heart; there a restored vision; somewhere else a radiant life. Wherever it has gone, and men have believed its truth, it leaves behind it the trail of happiness, joy, virtue, and vision, courage, and conviction.

Sinner without Christ, if you are reading this message, mark it well, for those who accept the message it comes out right. But for those who do not there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Grace College

HIGH SCHOOL DAY

March 16 and 17

Thursday March 16 will be for area high school juniors and seniors, and the 17th will be for those living beyond the 150 mile radius of the school. Full information has been sent to all churches.